

In the Claims:

Please enter the following amended claim 1:

1. (Twice Amended) A semiconductor workpiece, comprising:
a metal layer;
an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed directly on the metal layer, wherein
said inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard mask, and wherein said inorganic
dielectric ARC layer has a substantially uniform thickness over topical non-planarities
extending from the metal layer; and
a photoresist layer disposed on the ARC layer opposite the metal layer.

Please cancel claim 4.

Please enter the following amended claim 9:

9. (Twice Amended) A metallic stack for a semiconductor interconnect,
comprising:
a metal layer;
an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed directly on the metal layer, wherein
said inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard mask, and wherein said inorganic
dielectric ARC layer has a substantially uniform thickness over topical non-planarities
extending from the metal layer; and

C²
cont'd

a barrier layer disposed on the metal layer opposite the ARC layer.

Please cancel claim 12.

Please enter the following amended claim 17:

17. (Once Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:
an oxide layer formed on a wafer; and
at least one microelectronic structure extending from the oxide layer and including:
a barrier layer disposed on the oxide layer;
a metal layer disposed on the barrier layer;
an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed directly on the metal
layer, wherein said inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard
mask; and
a residual photoresist layer disposed directly on said inorganic dielectric
ARC layer.

C³

Please cancel claim 18.